

REMARKS

With this paper, Applicants have amended claims 1, 5 and 7-9 and canceled claim 4. Claims 1-3, 5-11 and 14-15 are pending. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Various claims have been amended to better clarify the structure of the shaped cleaning body used in the processes, systems and methods of the pending claims. The pending claims, all in some manner, are directed to solid, shaped cleaning bodies and use of those cleaning bodies to form a liquid cleaning concentrate, which, upon further dilution, forms a ready-to-use cleaning solution. The shaped cleaning bodies are made of a solid cleaner mass surrounded by a water-soluble polymeric shell. All of the pending claims recite that the shaped body has a narrow elongate form, either as a cylinder or with an elliptical or rectangular cross-sectional shape. The width of the shaped cleaning body, at its widest point is 1 to 3 cm and the length of the shaped cleaning body is at least 3.2 times its widest width. (Support for the length being 3.2 times the width can be found, for example, in the Examples, at the bottom of page 4). This narrow elongate form facilitates placing the shaped body into a container, such as a bottle, the narrow form easily fitting through the bottle's neck opening.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-11 and 14-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stamm (U.S. Patent No. 5,885,949). Applicants disagree.

Applicants continue to stress that Stamm does not teach or suggest the claimed shape and size of the shaped body of the pending claims.

Applicants acknowledge that Stamm states that the cleaner may be a tablet or a pellet. As stated before, a pellet is usually a spherical or generally rounded mass, typically small in size. A tablet is a disk-shaped mass, generally having a diameter greater than its thickness. Neither a pellet nor a tablet has the dimensions as claimed, that of having a length at least 3.2 times its width.

Applicants acknowledge that Stamm states, at column 5, lines 36-37, that the tablet may have any suitable size. This would allow a tablet of generally any size, with any dimensions, as

long as it is still a tablet. Again, a tablet does not have the dimensions as claimed. Stamm does not suggest having any other shaped article with any suitable size.

The Office Action has taken the stance that Stamm discloses a solid body having a water soluble shell surrounding a solid cleaner, because Stamm teaches mixing the ingredients, including PVA, together before tableting. The Office Action continues that the resulting product would be a body having PVA distributed throughout. According to the Office Action, this would result in a water soluble shell surrounding the components. This may indeed result in a water soluble shell surrounding the components. It does not, however, result in a water soluble shell surrounding the cleaner mass, as is claimed.

Mixing all the ingredients together, including PVA, before tableting, provides a resulting product that is generally homogeneous, with the PVA distributed throughout the tablet. The pending application differs in that the solid cleaning mass is made and then the shell (for example, PVA) is provided surrounding the solid cleaning mass. See for example, the Examples of the pending invention, where it is described that ingredients were mixed together to form solid cleaning formulations, and then those formulations were accommodated in water soluble shells.

Stamm does not teach or suggest a body having the recited shape, nor does Stamm teach or suggest a water-soluble shell around the solid cleaner mass. At least for these reasons, Applicants contend that the pending claims are allowable over Stamm, and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-11 and 14-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gladfelter et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,234,615). Applicants disagree.

Applicants continue to stress that Gladfelter et al. do not teach or suggest the claimed shape and size of the shaped body of the pending claims. Applicants agree that various dimensions and shapes are provided in Gladfelter et al., however, these do not lead one to the shape and size recited in the pending claims. The shape of the solid cleaning bodies of the present claims is specific.

At column 7, lines 17-22, Gladfelter et al. provide dimensions for the blocks, pellets, granules, and, short-and squat cylinders. These ranges of dimensions provided do not cover the ratio of length to width recited by the pending claims. More particularly, Gladfelter et al. does

not disclose or suggest the specific ratio of the pending claims. It would not have been obvious for one to arrive at the narrow elongate form, having the specific length to width ratio, of the pending claims, from the teachings of Gladfelter et al.

Gladfelter et al. do not teach or suggest a narrow elongate shape for the cleaning body, as recited by the pending claims. At least for these reasons, Applicants contend that the pending claims are allowable over Gladfelter et al., and request that the rejection be withdrawn.


SUMMARY

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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